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ABSTRACT

The debate embodied in Daniel Griffiths' October 1975 article and T. Barr Greenfield's responding article in February 1976 illustrates the dispute between the "naturalistic" and "phenomenological" views of organizational theory, respectively. The binary opposition of naturalistic and phenomenological approaches is wrong-minded; a much more useful approach is to see them as complementary. Personal experience and critical analysis both lead to an appreciation of the traditional "scientific" contribution of the naturalistic approach and the "humanizing" influence of phenomenology. On this basis, both theorizing and the preparation of researchers and practitioners in educational administration can be advanced by a conceptualization that formulates social action as a dialectical synthesis of scientific and humanistic modes of analysis. The approach may be captured under the broad label of scientific humanism. (Author/JG)

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reflections on a dialogue

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Seldom has a presentation stimulated so extensive an interest as that by T. Barr Greenfield (1975) at IIP 1974. Daniel Griffiths' response took shape first at NCPEA in 1974 and later in a formal presentation at the plenary session of UCEA at Dallas in 1975. It was published in the *UCEA Review* in the fall of 1975 and was followed by a further statement by Greenfield in the Review of February 1976. Subsequently, Crane and Walker reacted further in their article "Theory in the Real World of the Educational Administrator" in the *UCEA Review* of May 1976. This last article dealt with several specific items, while it assumed that Griffiths' statement had been "more than adequately answered by Greenfield himself." The basic papers, at this point, appear to be the first three listed above, namely, the original Greenfield statement, the Griffiths statement and the Greenfield responding statement.[1]

Greenfield contrasted two "perspectives" calling them the "naturalistic view" and the "phenomenological view." He found the former wanting and the latter highly promising. Griffiths came to the defense of the naturalistic and went so far, at one point, to state: "I would suggest that the Fiegl definition that was generally accepted 15 years ago be reinstated and that only work which approximates this definition be acceptable as theoretical" (1975:15). This statement is a call for a return to a naturalistic view. However, Griffiths also stated his belief that the phenomenological view "is useful . . . in order to understand the way members view the organizations in which they work and live . . ." (1975:26).

Each of the writers concludes that new theorizing is needed: Greenfield argues for a perspective shift and Griffiths urges that, because the "nature of administra-

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1. - T. Barr Greenfield, "Theory About Organization: A New Perspective and Its Implications for Schools," in Meredydd Hughes (ed.) *Administering Education: International Challenge* (London Athlone Press), 1975, pp. 71-99. Daniel E. Griffiths, "Some Thoughts About Theory in Educational Administration - 1975," *UCEA Review*, Vol. XVII, No. 1, Oct. 1975, pp. 12-18. T. Barr Greenfield, "Theory About What? Some More Thoughts About Theory in Educational Administration," *UCEA Review*, Vol. XVII, No. 2, Feb. 1976, pp. 4-9.

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tion is changing," new theories are needed. They seem to differ largely on the "how" and the "what" of theorizing about educational administration. To the extent that these positions differ on the intra-subjective process of theorizing and the out-there-in-life phenomena that are theorized about, they center upon the subjectivity/objectivity distinction.

These reflections will advance first my own conviction that the views are more usefully seen as complementary than conflictual. Further comments will be made on the subjectivity/objectivity distinction in relation to individual and collective meaning. Finally, the analysis will be extended briefly to bureaucracy and preparatory programming.

Some Reflections

My first contact with the contrast of inner and outer views of experience came while still in grade school when I ran across the article on "Logic" in the Ninth Edition of the *Britannica*. I remember clearly the experience of making a new distinction between the "logical" and "psychological" views of reasoning—it was something like coming over the top of a hill. While new to me, it had been around a long time—of course—and had been argued about by scholars for centuries. Indeed, it now appears to be that it was the issue of the status of ideas, whether they are out there objectively or in the consciousness of persons. We shall see that a similar difference separated Durkheim and Weber who here contrasted in the Greenfield paper (1975).

Patterns of ideas were involved in the concept of 'theory' as invented by the Greeks. It has derived from *theorein* (from which 'theater' is also derived), meaning contemplating, gazing upon, seeing with intention and interest. The theoretic posture appears in Rembrandt's painting of Aristotle contemplating the bust of Homer; it joins together the subject, Aristotle and the object, Homer, in a sort of complementarity.

As an undergraduate, my first contact with phenomenology came when Professor Gustav Hübener, a student of Husserl and Bergson and a refugee from Germany, taught us history of philosophy. His method, so much in contrast with the traditional objectivist thrust of my other preparation, opened up a fresh perspective on the central importance of consciousness, something like the slow raising of lights in a theatre, except that clarification of the implications has taken decades rather than seconds!

Another relevant experience was my contact at Harvard with the Unity of Science group (successor to the Vienna Circle, which continued first at Chicago and later at Harvard) at a time when the dominant figure was Phillip Frank. Such persons as P. W. Bridgeman, Harlow Shapley, Gerald Holton, George Wald and, on occasion, scholars from all parts of the world took part in the discussions. In general they could be classed in the naturalistic/logical positivist sector. A sharp subjectivist/objectivist distinction surely cannot cast doubt upon the element of human greatness incorporated in their efforts.

These autobiographical experiences support my own predisposition to see so much that is humanly useful in both the phenomenology and naturalist perspectives. And this position is not simply an eclectic one that would pick, here and there, the best of two perspectives. Rather, it is one that sees them as complementary and necessary to each other. Thus my own "psychological" bias (one for which I believe I can give "logical" support) was reinforced when I found that Goldstein in his article "The Phenomenological and Naturalistic Approaches to the Social" began " . . . in the course of what follows I want to show that far from opposing one another, these two approaches are complementary and both of them necessary if we are to have a full account of the phenomena in question" (1963:286). I shall not pursue the complementarity hypothesis here other than to suggest that anyone interested might find it useful to turn to the Goldstein article (1963:286-301) and the preceding (in the source cited) Nathanson article, "A Study in Philosophy and the Social Sciences (1963: 271-285)"; indeed the whole book has proved valuable to me. Other potentially useful formulations are Winch, *The Idea of a Social Science* and Radnitzky *Contemporary Schools of Metascience* (1973). The latter is particularly valuable for the development of the hermeneutic/dialectical aspect of understanding in the social or human sciences.

Private and Collective Phenomena

So far, if I understand it right, no person in the dialogue under consideration, has questioned the basic need for theory in both objective explanation and inner interpretative understanding. The differences are over issues of substantive and methodological validity of theoretic formulations predicated upon differences of assumption about the intellectual underpinning of theoretic structures or "ideal forms."

There does appear to be some inclination on the part of both writers to mention cases and Griffiths the changing nature of the field. (Greenfield appears to place greater explicit importance on examination of assumptions than does Griffiths). However, theorizing is, at base, an inner, cognitive process that confronts the area of study with hunches that are to be tested. Since the initial theorizing determines the questions and the data taken into account, it is fair to say that research cannot overcome its assumptions unless there is a continuing check back and forth between theory and systematic observation.

Under traditional conceptions of research such tacking has been seen as "contaminating." Merleau-Ponty (although he does not accept the position) has put it rather succinctly: "The movement back and forth from facts to ideas and from ideas to facts is discredited as a bastard precedure - neither science nor philosophy . . ."(in Natanson, 1963:489). The dialectical relationship of theory and fact is seen as one that is essential to critical awareness of theoretical presuppositions and their determination of fact. To concentrate singly upon "hard facts" is to promote what Abraham

Kaplan in his *Conduct of Inquiry*, adapting Nietzsche, has called the "dogma of immaculate perception" (1964:131).

If we grant that private cognitive pattern or belief-gestalt is the creater of fact, then all fact has behind it something of the order of theory, whether it is myth ideology or a more or less consciously formulated theory. Kuhn, in his analysis of the growth of science, has called such an image of reality shared by a scientific community a "paradigm" (1970:174). We now have moved from the privately held image of reality to that held collectively, collective consciousness or *gemeingeist*. It is here, as Greenfield points out, that Durkheim and Weber started from different bases. Durkheim, in the Preface to *Suicide* stated ". . . the individual is dominated by a moral reality greater than himself: namely collective reality . . . . Thus it will appear more clearly why sociology can and must be objective" (1951:38-9). "Sociology . . . is a science which attempts the interpretive understanding of social action . . . In 'action' is included all human behavior when and insofar as the acting individual attaches a subjective meaning to it" (1947:88). Thus they stand apart on the objective/subjective dichotomy and are representative of the naturalistic/phenomenological dichotomy in sociology.

But neither dealt explicity with the epistemological questions related to individual and collective understanding. As has been pointed by Pelz, (1974:1-43) the fact that they do not remain consistent with their initial assumption suggests that neither had a consciously based answer to the epistemological issue. The question about the nature of a "social fact" still stands as an important and challenging question. It is important for educational administration and educational organization, for the facts in this field are also largely social. Those who give ontological primacy to the individual and see social facts as simply "psychological facts added up" do not appear to be supported by observation.[2] Groups of the same individuals over time often change in ways that turn out to be more consistent with the behavior of their peers than with their own previous behavior. But social status of fact does not necessarily justify attribution of the sort of objective status of ideas that Durkheim claimed. Rather, it seems that there is a sort of social "contagion" through which ideas are given collective legitimacy through credible idea-bearing individuals and groups. Since groups often have geographical shape. The naturalistic perspective has often been characterized as Anglo-Saxon and the phenomenological, as continental European.

If we grant the above analysis, particular paradigms of theories which are current in a scientific field can become the vested interest of certain research groups of publications making it difficult for the advocates of competing theories to break in. Greenfield is right when he contends that the phenomenological approach is more likely to promote critical examination of the intellectual bases upon which theories rest. The problem of institutionalized legitimacy of inadequate theory will be returned to later.

Genet in *The Balcony* (1958) may be said to have been concerned about the nature of reality in the context of individual and collective consciousness. The bishop and several other characters act out, with the assistance of prostitutes, their own fantasies. Later, with the assistance of photographers and the concomitant revolution they seek to transfer their private fantasies into collective consciousness with the possibility of future social fact. One may think of them as striving to create social "reality" out of private intention. One is led to reflect on the ways leadership legitimizes fantasy and so incorporates into society a particular form of meaning. Such a "cult of personality" is aided and abetted by the subjective meaning that is generally ascribed to leadership, namely, that the leader deserves to have the right opportunity to assert the organizational thrust that is meaningful to that leader. All of us know of school systems where the coming and going of a succession of superintendents, each of whom has a particular subjective sense of the position, with limited

2. - Few studies of the interaction of psychological, historical and cultural dimensions have come to attention. Devereux's case history of the Hungarian Revolution is suggestive. See G. Devereux, "Two Types of Modal Personality Models" in *Studying Personality Cross-culturally* (Evanston: Row, Peterson and Company), 1961, ch. 6.

The binary conception of mental perspectives is a very old one, first on record by Roger Bacon, followed by Blaise Pascal, Cardinal Newman, Pierre Duhem, William Jones and Kurt Goldstein. The dichotomies have been variously characterized as visualizing/mathematical; visualizing/theoretical, inductive/deductive, tender-minded/tought minded, analytic/synthetic and concrete/abstract. Here, naturalistic/phenomenological the conceptions seem to be roughly isomorphic with that of left and right mindedness that has recently appeared in the literature (e.g., Ornstein (ed.) *The Nature of Human Consciousness*, Freeman and Co., 1968). Those studies suggest a physiological basis for binary formulations. Studies growing out of Kurt Goldstein's concrete/abstract distinction find important social-cultural correlates. In sum, explanatory understanding still remains problematical.

recognition of the collective meanings shared by groups in the staff. Communication gaps of that sort help to engender alienation and reduce effective social action. They impede development of intentional educational programming that is supported by the legitimacy of critically examined meaning. These considerations raise the "objective" status of authority and institutional grounds for compliance. A number of "objective" or naturalistic observers of society during recent decades have commented on the changes that have been going on concerning socially sanctioned conceptions of authority and the degree of social consensus in the shared subjective meanings. Tönnies was dismayed by the shift from *gemeinschaft* toward *gesselschaft* and Durkheim was disturbed by the shift from organic to mechanical solidarity, seeing anomie as one of the products (in Pelz, 1974:5-6). The strengthening of forces of rationality, increasing normative variety and the emergence of more universalistic criteria, among other trends, have been noted by Levy (1966) in his naturalistic analysis of modernization. These shifts can be expected to erode traditional collective meanings and to decrease consensus on a whole variety of elements of social action, including authority. It is on this point that Griffiths quotes Lord Morris: "The peoples do not want to be governed, and clearly they do not believe that there is any real and final necessity to be governed . . . The most that is likely to emerge is a leader who is a genius at forecasting what is practical in government, which means fundamentally, and perhaps exclusively, what is acceptable" (1975:16). At root, this is an objectivist/naturalistic perspective on the sorts of changes that have already been noted by objectivist scholars. The longing seems to be for a governing elite resting upon a relatively homogenous collective meaning.

The phenomenological approach endorses a critical posture toward institutionalized social meaning and gives credibility to the eidetic insight of the individual. (It is no wonder that Husserl and his students suffered (under Hitler). Jürgen Habermas, following the phenomenological perspective, is today prominent in the hermeneutic, critical analysis of the social forms of legitimation, particularly those of capitalism.[3] Many are inclined to see such critical consciousness as a useful prophylaxis against social oppression based upon objectified and collectively legitimized sources of social power. Under these circumstances one might hope for leadership that is not simply the engineer of the "acceptable" but, rather, one able to conceptualize the variety of social action, in the Weberian sense, so as to facilitate flexible social policies that give both collective coherence and latitude for variety in individual aspirations. This is an immensely complex task for the educational administrator; it suggests the need for a strong theoretic preparation drawing upon both naturalistic and phenomenological approaches that may be synthesized in social action. It is right here that the rationale for a scientific humanism in the preparation of administrators appears to lie.

A cursory glance over the present century reveals shifts in reliance upon science and humanism in thinking about administration. The scientific management movement relied heavily on the former; the human relations movement reflected the human interest of the latter. The objectivity of scientific analysis provides useful correction for human error but, when institutionalized, may provide the basis for oppressive dogma. Humanism opens the way to growing dignity for individuals and to their diverse contributions but also permits the hubris of special privilege. It is hypothesized that the interaction of science and humanism, as planned components of administrative preparation, will provide a self-correcting device that can enhance the reliability and validity of educational processes and techniques while minimizing their negative human impact. Conceptualized in this way, humanism will contribute to depth of insight into individual and collective human interests while science will add a component of clarity of explanation of how those wholesome human states of affairs may be anticipated and realized in educational institutions. This analysis formulates scientific humanism as the primary cybernetic component of socially accountable educational administration both as preparation and in its performance. The naturalistic approach will help to keep school administration objectively honest; the phenomenological approach will help to keep it humanly relevant. The question, then, is not which but how both.

Concluding Comment on Bureaucracy

It may be trite to observe that the complex organization has been around a long while as illustrated in the coordinated social action needed to build the pyramids and to govern large empires. However, bureaucracy, as it has come to be known in recent decades, appears to be a modern human invention. Systematic study and practical application of complex organizational activity seem to have been given modern impetus by the cameralists as they rationalized and gave operational effectiveness to the autocratic government of Prussia. It is not unreasonable to hypothesize that the social technology then invented stood ready for such industrial entrepreneurs as Ford and Krupp as well as Hitler. The objective, naturalistic study of bureaucracy has, of necessity, been the study of such structures. Before long one can come to take that bureaucratic structure as "natural" — an error which may be called the "naturalistic fallacy." Phenomenology provides a useful antidote. This fallacy lies behind the relatively uncritical imposition of bureaucratic technology and authority upon colleges and universities. It involves the threat that with faculty compliance, criteria of

3. - N.B. his "Introduction: Some Difficulties in the Attempt to Link Theory and Praxis" in Jurgen Hoberman *Theory and Practice* (Boston: Beacon Press), 1973.

efficiency and effectiveness will supercede criteria of intellectual inquiry. These observations are not intended to give support to rather romantic and/or sweeping generalizations, such as the impending "death of bureaucracy." Rather, they are intended to promote the theoretic reformulation of the structure of social action in ways that are much more complexly attuned to the collective welfare and the dignity of individual insight. Some may see this conception as "anarchical"; Griffiths ascribes it to ASCD's version of phenomenology (1975:16). The charge seems to me to beg the questions; the need is for educational organization that is both objectively and subjectively valid in terms that are humanly significant. Theoretic analyses that draw upon both naturalistic and phenomenological perspectives offer some promise of improved answers.

Summary

The binary opposition of naturalistic and phenomenological approaches is wrong-minded; a much more useful approach is to see them as complementary. Personal experience and critical analysis both lead to an appreciation of the traditional "scientific" contribution of the naturalistic approach and the "humanizing" influence of phenomenology. On this basis both theorizing and the preparation of researchers and practitioners in educational administration can be advanced by a conceptualization that formulates social action as a dialectical synthesis of scientific and humanistic modes of analysis.[4] The approach may be captured under the broad label of scientific humanism. □

4. - For a further development of this position see Oliver Gibson and Marilyn Stetar, "Preparatory Program at SUNY Buffalo: A Report of Experience," *UCEA Review*, Vol. XVII, No. 3, May 1976, pp. 3-9.

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